InCommon 2017 Fee Increase FAQ

> ⓘ **Additional Resources**
>
> A webinar October 31, 2016, discussed the need for the fee increase.
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> - View the archived webinar (Adobe Connect)
> - Review the slide deck from the presentation.

- What are my fees going to be in 2017?
- Why are fees going up so soon?
- What longer-term issues were identified?
- Who serves on InCommon Steering Committee?
- Why are there different fee categories now?
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What are my fees going to be in 2017?

The InCommon Steering Committee has approved new fee structure for 2017 and effective November 1, 2016. This is the first fee increase since 2012.

Why are fees going up so soon?

In January 2016, Internet2 established the division of Trust and Identity Services and hired Kevin Morooney into the role of Vice President for that division. Earlier this year, Kevin led groups of community leaders through a series of guided conversations to assess the trust and identity needs of the community and the capacity of both Internet2 and the community to deliver on those needs in the face of increasing urgency.

These conversations focused on sustainability for both the InCommon trust federation and the Internet2 TIER Program (Trust and Identity in Education and Research), which includes an open-source identity software suite and a set of common campus practices that integrates seamlessly with the InCommon Federation. You will find TIER information and links to blogs and other information on the Internet2 website, including a blog post from Klara Jelinkova, chair of both the InCommon Steering Committee and the TIER Community Investor Council, and an overview of the TIER program.

The InCommon Steering Committee determined that a fee increase in the upcoming billing cycle is necessary to close critical gaps in federation operations and support Shibboleth development. (Shibboleth is used by over 90 percent of InCommon Higher Education participants.) This nominal fee increase is the first since 2012. Invoices with the new annual fees will be sent in November 2016 for the 2017 calendar year.

What longer-term issues were identified?

Some overarching, common themes emerged for both InCommon and TIER:

- Internet2/InCommon/TIER have a leadership position in US trust and identity. There is a desire to maintain this position, even in the face of considerable threats.
- The trust and identity solution set(s) for higher education remain sufficiently unique such that we need to continue to develop these solutions.
- The InCommon Federation and TIER Program are highly dependent upon one another.
- Sustained engagement with both executive and technical community leadership will be necessary for a vibrant trust and identity set of capabilities and vetted campus and partner deployment strategies.
- Services and new capabilities require multiple funding strategies that best suit their contexts.

Who serves on InCommon Steering Committee?

You can find out who serves on the InCommon Steering committee by visiting the InCommon About page. . The Policies page provides a pointer to the Steering ByLaws and the InCommon LLC documents, which provides the basis for how we do what we do.

Why are there different fee categories now?

The InCommon Steering Committee determined that:

1. The InCommon Steering Committee determined that Research Organizations, particularly VOs (virtual organizations) have limited funding but are very important to many InCommon identity providers. Research Organizations are exempt from this year's fee increase.
2. InCommon Steering also determined that Higher EducationParticipants that subscribe to the Certificate Service as of November 1, but do not yet use the Federation should see a smaller increase. While the Federation was the primary reason for the increase in fees, Certificate Service subscribers will also benefit from the increased operational efficiency and effectiveness.

What is the next step for the financial model?

This is the first step toward a financial model that will allow InCommon to provide the required services and support for the community. InCommon and federated identity have become critical infrastructure for many of our Participants. We need to ensure that the resources available will allow InCommon to operate and thrive in such an environment. In addition, TIER will allow us to provide software that is easier to configure and maintain, as well as implement agreed-on campus practices to improve interoperability.

Conversations will continue this year and throughout 2017, involving community leaders and key constituents, as we develop a financial model that is aligned with these requirements. We expect that this will mean additional fee increases ahead to achieve sustainability and ensure the capacity to meet the identity and access management needs of the community.

How can I find out more?

We know this will generate questions and discussion. Toward that end, we will provide additional communications, including a webinar on Monday, October 31, at 4 pm (ET), and a community comment period that will run through November 11. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to provide feedback on both this fee increase and the general direction that we have outlined above.

If you are attending the EDUCAUSE Annual Conference, there will be opportunities to talk with staff members and members of the InCommon Steering Committee. See a consolidated list of Internet2-wide sessions, including Trust and Identity, at www.internet2.edu/news-events/events/internet2-educause/ .